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JAEGER PREDICTS VOTER TURNOUT TO BE UP FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

Bismarck, ND – Secretary of State Al Jaeger predicts approximately 111,000 voters will turnout across the state for Tuesday's election.

Jaeger's prediction translates into a voter turnout of approximately twenty-three percent of the state's estimated 481,351 eligible voters¹. This is up slightly from the previous two election cycles in 1998 and 2000 when North Dakota voters turned out in record low numbers for the primary. Voter turnout for the 1998 primary election was twenty-one percent and twenty percent in 2000.

Jaeger attributes the slight increase in turnout to greater interest in some local races across the state where hotly contested mayoral and school district elections will be decided. There are also a number of key county races where the field of candidates will be narrowed for the upcoming general election in November.

"It's exciting that there are local races across the state that are creating some interest in Tuesday's election and grabbing the attention of voters," said Jaeger. "It supports the old saying that all politics really is local."

Jaeger also anticipates voter turnout to be strengthened in Tuesday's election by the fact that it will be the first statewide primary election where the City of Fargo will hold its election in conjunction with Cass County.

"I'm pleased that the city of Fargo decided to combine with Cass County's primary election. It makes good sense from the perspective of administration and cost efficiency and is ultimately better for the voters of Cass County," said Jaeger. "Now voters in Fargo can go to the polls once and vote in the county's primary election and elect candidates to city and school district offices. Once again, it demonstrates the value of counties and cities holding combined elections in June."

Jaeger's prediction is also based upon information collected from the state's county auditors earlier today that shows the number of absentee ballots requested for Tuesday's election is up from previous years. Jaeger believes that some of the increase in absentee voting is a result of law changes that have made voting by absentee ballot easier and more convenient for all voters.

"Absentee voting is starting to catch on more and more and will only increase in the future as voters begin to realize how easy and convenient it is," said Jaeger.

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¹ Voting age population based on estimates from the North Dakota State Census Data Center at North Dakota State University, Fargo.